



The South India

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Presbyters' Salaries

Whether it be a conference on the subject of charisma, counselling or community organisation, discussion of liturgical renewal or laity training or even about Yoga inevitably there will be at least one resolution concerning the rôle of presbyters. There will also be a resolution demanding the inclusion of another subject in the curriculum of the theological colleges. The presbyter is still the centre of all activities in the congregation and the church expects him to be the key person in its life. Even the constitution provides an important rôle for him as the chairman of the pastorate and other committees.

In spite of such expectations, after studying theology, the erstwhile queen of sciences, and after getting ordained to the so-called kingly profession, the presbyter receives a beggarly salary. Either the people are not concerned about the living conditions of the presbyter or they invariably identify suffering and sacrifice with the concept of priesthood. In the context of salary structures of our country, the pay of the presbyter is insignificant. After graduation and a minimum of three years in a theological college, he receives less than a teacher in the high school. Therefore the challenge and the forceful plea of the Bishop in Madras for a consideration of the presbyters' salaries is timely and is highly welcomed. We hope that in the coming months the dioceses and later the synod will pay serious attention to this matter and take action so that the salary in a large city will at least be Rs. 600 per month with a free house.

However, the question of the salaries of the presbyters cannot be considered in isolation as it is closely interlinked to a number of other factors. The first question is the meaning of *ordination* both as seen by the church as well as understood by the members of the congregation. The rôle, functions and the expectations of the people, whether the presbyter is to be 'all in all' and 'Jack of all trades' or one among many and perhaps a member of the team in a parish with specific responsibilities are to be studied. In other words, the question is whether or not it is absolutely essential for a group of Christians gathered anywhere to have among them an ordained full-time presbyter. Secondly it is common in practically every town and city to find CSI churches very close to one another. In some places within a radius of half a mile one can see two or three church buildings and on Sundays each of them not even half filled with worshippers. How best can the presbyters minister to these congregations and can a team containing two presbyters look after five or six churches? Or is it possible to close some buildings of worship and strengthen the other places? Undoubtedly the question of *buildings* has to be discussed as it takes so much time and energy to maintain them. People often find it necessary to build new churches and in certain places Christians spend a number of years in building a new church and then they immediately want a full-time presbyter. We have the problem of having empty or half-filled churches while at the same time new churches are being constructed and these cost a lot of money. At the same time, there are many dozens of congregations scattered all over the dioceses, particularly in Andhra Pradesh, which do not have the ministrations of presbyters even once in three months. Thirdly some of the churches are financially well to do



while others are not. Some of the dioceses still depend on subsidy from abroad for the payment of salaries to the presbyters. It will not be fair if a few dioceses pay more than others just because they have the resources. What is the best way to *share our resources* within and between the dioceses? It might be argued that if the church wants to maintain the present structure it may not be possible for all the congregations and all the dioceses of the Church of South India to be fully self-supporting in the matter of the salaries of the presbyters for many decades to come. Fourthly in some dioceses the ecclesiastical authorities as well as the congregations do not take kindly to the idea of a presbyter's wife taking up a job. In other places they take this matter into consideration and also provide jobs for the wives of the presbyters particularly when transfers are made. It is a question of *stewardship* not only concerning the presbyters as an individual but also of his family. It is the responsibility of the church as a whole.

I was privileged to attend the meetings of the Christian Peace Conference in Hungary in September. After the meetings I spent a weekend in *Pecs*, a city in the Southern part of Hungary. As a guest of the Baptist Church I preached on two occasions besides visiting Sunday Schools. In the city is a large, ancient and beautiful Roman Catholic Cathedral dating back to over a thousand years. The Roman Catholic, the Lutheran and the Reformed Churches have entered into an agreement with the Government by which they have handed over all the properties to the State which in turn subsidizes the salaries of the priests as well as takes care of the maintenance of the buildings. I met the pastor of the Pentecostal Church who is a full-time engineer and therefore the congregation does not pay his salary. The Baptist pastor in whose house I stayed looked after the congregation for three days a week and during the remaining four days he taught in the Baptist Seminary in Budapest which is 250 kilometres away. When I enquired as to how he was able to do this he mentioned that his congregation of 300 had 40 elders who took the responsibility for visiting, teaching, conducting prayer meetings and other activities. The Church had an adult choir of 70 and quite a number of the members of the congregation helped in the Sunday Schools. These three instances illustrate three different ways of providing for the presbyters and also for the participation of the people in caring for one another.

In the former era, there were churches in India which were places of worship for the soldiers and their families, whereas at present hardly any family lives nearby and come from far away places to the church. The church has to think and plan for the maximum and proper use

of church buildings and compounds as well as for the maintenance of presbyters. A few of them can easily be given to the Government and from the money received, endowments can be created for the salaries of the presbyters. While discussing the salaries of the presbyters the church should realise its deep sense of gratitude to the thousands of men who have so faithfully served and silently suffered, while patiently bearing many problems.

When the history of our church is written, many people far off places and their dedicated services will, we hope, find a unique place. The church should not only honour those who served in the past and who are serving at present by mentioning in the pages of its history books and in its prayers to God, but should show its concern in practical terms by providing them adequately as they carry on their work.

Presbyter's Salary—Justice or Charity

We are concerned about the Church, we are concerned about the doctrines of the Church, we are concerned about the unity of the Church, but the question comes to me, 'Are we really concerned about our pastors?' How do we express our concern? Perhaps, if not all, most of us are aware of the struggles they go through. My main question is—how have we expressed our concern? Is it enough to speak about and think about it? It is time we did something about it.

WHO ARE OUR PASTORS?

In the CSI Lectionary, we think about the whole subject of the ordained ministry on the 11th Sunday after Pentecost and the readings for that Sunday remind us that the pastor is a 'watchman' (Old Testament Lesson), an 'ambassador' (Epistle), a 'shepherd' (the Holy Gospel). These are indeed positions of privilege and responsibility and the Scriptures have very definitely taught us to look up to our pastors and respect them. A pastor is the shepherd of his sheep, a leader of his people, a person who has been specially called, trained and qualified for the holy and special office of the priesthood. It is sometimes possible that some of our pastors fall short, but our concern should be, do we really look after our pastors as shepherds and leaders.

HOW SHOULD OUR PASTORS BE TREATED?

The past: We have often heard it said that the pastor is the most respected man in the community. We have heard of many village congregations visiting their pastors with baskets of fruits, vegetables, chicken and even cattle. In some of the Western Churches, the pastor used to be given a handsome Easter offering. In a few of the Syrian Orthodox Churches, he sometimes even gets a very small percentage of the big dowry. Several years ago in many places much of the church produce from the Church lands were given to the pastor. True to the traditional Christian understanding, in the past, the pastor was the 'guru' and people were concerned about him as a 'sishya' is concerned about a 'guru'.

The present: Times have changed and our concerns have also changed. Nowadays many of our pastors go through a great deal of financial hardship. Many of our pastors are poorly paid and so ill-clad and neglected. To quote Evangelist E. Dahanga (Diocese of Assam) in an article contributed to the *North Indian Churchman*—July issue—entitled 'Presbyters' Salaries'—'Some presbyters enjoy heavenly peace of mind and others undergo the torture of hell. If we continue this system, we shall do injustice to the presbyters of these pastorates . . .'. I know of a very definite case, where

the pastor and his family lived on just coffee two days because of their financial situation. Many instances of anxiety and suffering could be quoted.

We sometimes hear of the argument that pastors must make sacrifices. In the very acceptance of the ministry the individual makes a sacrifice. Sacrifice does not mean no comforts, little food and scanty clothes. I am convinced that the pastor need not live a princely life, neither need he live a beggarly existence. He should be paid a wage which will free him from family anxieties and worries. Every pastor should get not a high salary but a living wage.

We sometimes forget that he is expected to live up to a certain level and the Church never provides the means for him to live up to that level. There is so much to be done. He has to welcome the rich and the poor, the educated and uneducated, the healthy and the sick and he should be able to maintain a home to do this. We should, therefore provide a salary which will keep him above want and above the temptations of borrowing or touching Church money. We do not have to pay him the salary of an I.A.S. officer, neither do we have to pay him the salary of a senior peon.

The future: I have tried to collect some data and do not want to make any judgement or come to a conclusion regarding our concerns for our pastors. I am most grateful to Mr. S. J. Wilfred who has worked out facts and figures. The following facts speak for themselves and I would like our readers to form their own impressions and arrive at their own conclusion. My question is 'Are we truly concerned about our pastors?'

A CAREFUL STUDY OF PAY STRUCTURES

For this purpose family budgets were got prepared by 3 housewives, who had experience of the work and the responsibilities of presbyters and also the minimum standard required to be maintained by them. As there were some minor discrepancies in these budgets, some adjustments had been made and a final budget has been prepared. It works out as follows:—

Family Budget as finalised after discussion for a husband and wife

	Rs.
House rent	175.00
Food	200.00
Savings	35.00
Contribution	40.00
Travel	30.00

Washing	20.00
Servant	30.00
Electricity	25.00
Clothing	40.00
Incidentals	35.00

Total: Rs. 630.00

Add: 10% for unexpected expenditure including hospitality 63.00

Total: Rs. 693.00

It may be stated that this budget provides for the minimum daily necessities and the financial obligations of a presbyter and his wife without children.

Comparison of scales of pay of presbyters with those paid to Section Heads/Superintendents in various offices :

A study of salaries paid by offices and firms in Private Sectors are certainly much more than the Government Offices. The reasons are :

- the Government Offices offers maximum privileges and security and
- there are vast opportunities to go higher up in the ladder.

Numerous examples can be given of persons starting at the lowest rung of the ladder namely routine clerks rising up to very high posts like Deputy Secretaries, Joint Secretaries and even Secretaries. Therefore while we cannot adopt the scales of pay offered by offices in Private Sectors, we should at least try to equate the scale of pay and total emoluments drawn by our presbyters to those drawn by the Section Heads/Superintendents in Government Offices. The scale of pay drawn by a Section Head in Tamil Nadu Secretariat is 425-25-500-30-650-40-50 plus D.A. Rs. 115 plus City Compensation allowance of Rs. 44 plus House rent allowance of Rs. 64. The scale of pay of a Section Head in the Office of the Accountants-General, Tamil Nadu, is 500-900 plus D.A. 7%; City Compensation allowance 6%; House rent allowance 15%; i.e. the minimum will be Rs. 740 and the maximum will be Rs. 1,332. The minimum drawn by a Government servant in this category are 648/1073.

Family Budget :

According to the family budget, the total minimum amount required for a husband and wife to live decently is Rs. 690. This includes house rent of Rs. 175; Travel Rs. 30; Electricity Rs. 25. As free accommodation and electricity are provided to the presbyters and T.A. is being worked out separately, we could eliminate these items while working out the scale of pay. The balance works out to Rs. 463 or Rs. 460 in round figures. Out of this Rs. 460, Rs. 60 may be set apart as D.A. which could be reduced, when the prices start coming down and stabilise. Therefore the minimum of the scale that we prescribe should start with Rs. 400. This is certainly less than the minimum of the scale of Section Heads in the Government Secretariat. Secretariat scale goes upto Rs. 850. We need not have such a high maximum salary. We could suggest the following scales:—

SUGGESTED PAY SCALES

Rs. 400-5-450-10-600. This scale is applicable only to highly qualified people who offer themselves for the ministry, i.e. who are graduates with B.D. Non-graduates with B.D. qualification may be given Rs. 300-5-350-10-400 and non-graduates with L.Th. may be given Rs. 275-5-325-10-425. In future we should try to recruit only

graduates, so that the standard of presbyters could be improved.

House Rent Allowance :

As most of the presbyters are given rent-free accommodation with electricity charges paid, these elements have been removed from the family budget. In cases where rent-free accommodation are not available the house rent may be fixed by the competent authorities taking into consideration the location at which the presbyter is working.

Travelling Allowance :

The rates of T.A. fixed should be reasonable and should not put the presbyter to extra expenditure.

Medical Allowance :

Government and most of the firms in the Private Sectors bear the entire medical expenses of their employees. The diocese cannot afford to do so. At present in the Madras Diocese, a presbyter gets Rs. 150 per year as medical grant plus spectacles allowance Rs. 25 and dental Rs. 100 making a total of Rs. 275 (subject to the production of necessary certificates of actually incurring the expenses). This leads to undesirable practices in some cases. It is therefore suggested that a flat allowance of Rs. 25 p.m. may be allowed to a family towards medical expenses. This should not be paid monthly, but from time to time on the submission of bills and vouchers.

Children's Allowance :

At present the presbyters working in the Madras Diocese are paid Rs. 10 p.m. per child upto 4 children. This is most unrealistic and has to be revised rationally. The cost of maintaining a child is anything between Rs. 40 to 80 per month. So we should at least give Rs. 50 per child but for only two children. This will be in line with the family planning objectives which is of utmost importance to the country.

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Graduates with B.D.	400-5-450-10-600 Plus D.A. 15%
Non-graduates with B.D.	300-5-350-10-450 Plus D.A. 15%
Non-graduates with L.Th.	275-5-325-10-425 Plus D.A. 15%
Travelling allowance	To be fixed ad hoc by competent authorities
Medical allowance:	At the rate of Rs. 25 p.m. paid annually or when the need arises
Children's allowance:	Rs. 50 p.m. per child upto two children.

These figures are self-evident. They speak to us. Under which category can we place our presbyters. We should also remember that many of these factories give an annual bonus and subsidy towards medical expenses or free treatment in the factory. In a few factories mid-day meals are provided at a subsidised rate.

I would like to suggest the above scales of salary for our presbyters. The Synod of the Church of South India should take this matter up seriously. The Dioceses often plead that there is no money and therefore we cannot give more. This involves the question of justice to our presbyters. To me the question is 'Are we being fair to our presbyters?' If we face this question fairly and squarely, we should find the money, to pay our presbyters a living wage.

SUNDAR CLARKE
Bishop in Madras

Yoga for the Presbyters

We are hesitant to utilize anything that is not in Christian usage, because of the fear that it may be diabolical. But how did the writer of the fourth gospel use the concept of Logos which was alien to him? Surely he was led by the Holy Spirit to give due consideration to it. He found it very suitable not only to express more clearly the idea of incarnation of Christ, but also to appeal to the Hellenistic world in a convincing manner that their Logos was no more a mere philosophical idea but become flesh in Jesus Christ. Is the Holy Spirit leading us these days in India to consider Yoga and other helpful Eastern spiritualities for appropriating them with proper adaptations for our spiritual training in our Christendom? Robert De Nobili and others tried to adopt the Vedic styles in their missionary and evangelistic activities. They seem to have succeeded to a certain level, but suspicions arose in the minds of the hierarchy in the Roman Church, and their freedom was much curtailed. There are some reminiscences of their activities. Perhaps there was a difference, that they adopted the Vedic styles more as means for their missionary activities, than as a real way of life.

Sometimes it is asked how does Yoga help in spiritual development? It is a good question. Yogic asanas appear outwardly like the common physical exercises. They may be such. But there is a great difference. In the Yogic asanas, the body and the mind, being involved, are specially conditioned and corrected to be and to serve as the temple of God, by certain well known and approved techniques of concentration and meditation. In Yoga some of the asana postures are conducive to deep prayer and meditation, and communion with God. They are symbolic of devotional expressions, of our approach to and being in God. Yoga trains in concentration and meditation which are basic requirements for true worship and prayer. There must be well-being in the body for concentration and to remain in prayer and meditation. Yoga helps to be hale and healthy. (One can be free from many ailments e.g., colds, constipation, tiresomeness, mental disturbances and psychosomatic troubles. People of advancing age can be youthful and energetic.)

Several books have been written like *Yoga is a way of life*, *Yoga and health* etc. Yoga can be freed from its Hindu philosophic ideas, and can be used as a scientific discipline in any religion. Buddhists have used it, Jains have used it adapted to their Philosophies. The Christians can use it, as 'Christian Yoga' with helpful adaptation. It must start as by an individual Christian and as the devotee grows and develops he becomes stable and firmly established in Christ. He is a better Christian and a dynamic person. He becomes the leaven and attracts others, and gradually a fellowship is formed, spreading to the Christian Congregation. A nucleus is always essential for any dynamic movement. Yoga conditions the body, mind and the spirit to be offered as a living sacrifice to live in Christ and to serve the church and the people more effectively, realising the image of God in oneself, by being transformed into His likeness in Christ (Rom. 12: 1, 2), attaining to the full stature of Christ.

In the spiritual training of the people, the pastors will be dealing with three categories of people:

- (i) The rural people who are satisfied with emotional expression of their faith. To such people Bhajans and religious folk dance and music, the indigenous patterns such as Nam Jap, Ram Bhajan, Pandari Bhajan, Hare Ram Hare Krishna Bhajan etc., which are very popular in the country, may be provided. Our pastors must get a good knowledge of such religious expressions.
- (ii) The Urban and the sophisticated people in the church,—these are in most cases fully engaged with their secular occupations and they want regular ministrations, in the church and the community. They must have their Sunday services and other activities well organized and the pastor as much attractively and entertainingly as possible, introducing some new items now and then. They may be satisfied with such religious life. For these services, the present training in the theological institutions may be adequate.
- (iii) The third category in the Christian Community are those who are deeply interested to achieve fuller life in Christ with personal experience of His presence and grace, and who would be willing to undergo any spiritual discipline to attain the full stature of the measure of Christ and the indwelling experience of God. When they do not find such helps and spiritual facilities in the Church, they seek elsewhere and even approach and meet some Swamis and Yogis, as prevalent in the west. Among this third category there are some Hindus also who seek Christ alternately. To this category of people, Yoga of Christian adaptation will be very helpful and a relevant provision by the Church.

From another aspect of the study it must be noted that in the modern times, both in the East and the West, of industrial progress, technological development, man's restless activity to cope with such rapid advancement in all areas of life, and in the conditions of plenty and poverty, what man desires is the 'inner peace' or the peace of mind. The business of getting a living becomes every year more and more competitive and irritating. Rushing and running from one to another, has become the speed of life today. The result is,—restless spirit, nervous breakdown, blood pressure, loss of mental balance, exhaustion, seeking medical specialists and large amount of money spent on medical bills etc. Long life is no boon but it is no joy under such circumstances.

Life is a gift from God. At any age man is expected to be healthy and alive, for any illness of man, God has provided remedy and buoyance of life within himself. When the West has failed to tap these inner resources, the East succeeded through the system of Yoga. Men and women from the West run to India in search of remedy for their restless spirits, and for fuller realization of their spiritual aspirations.

There has been much revival in the national and religious cultures of the East and especially in India. Yoga schools and Yoga Research centres are started all over the country. Tirupathi Venkateswara University in Andhra is planning to start a Yoga Research Institute with elaborate equipment. In their report asking for support the organizers have stated that there would be many men and women from the West who would study and train themselves in Yoga. The Church cannot afford anymore to be a silent spectator of such growing conditions. The Church and its seminaries should study the subject of Yoga and see what can be appropriated to enrich the life of the Church and make it attractive and appealing in the life or devotion, worship and meditation.

As I conclude, may I suggest a few points for our consideration :—

1. The Church through its seminaries and congregations should carefully plan and provide opportunities for the study of the subject of Yoga and such other topics.

2. Can the Church in India consider the Indian spirituality as expressed in Yoga and such other disciplines, and appropriate them with careful adaptations, for further enrichment of the life of the Church and its

members in their development of interior life for powerful manifestation in the exterior life of worship, witness and service ?

3. May this subject be treated as a special study at the present time in the efforts for renewal and building of the Church on indigenous lines, and plan for the same ?

4. Introduce Yoga with a Christian background and initiate keen men and women into it. Plan short periods (seven day) of teaching and training the pastors and others who express a genuine desire for it, in groups of 20 or 25.

5. Can the theological institutions consider this subject as an item in their curriculum of theological and ministerial training ?

C. S. SUNDARESAN,
Bishop.

(Extracts from a paper presented by Bishop C. S. Sundaresan under the title 'Spiritual training of the Presbyters' at the Theological Education Consultation held at Mangalore in February 1975.—
Editor.)

The Ordination of Women to Priesthood

A declaration on the elimination of Discrimination was adopted by the UNO on November 7, 1967. Before the decade was on it's way out the UN passed a resolution that 1975 should be celebrated as International Women's Year.

During the intervening period we have seen many changes. The rapid advancement of technology and the stimulating excitement of a new space age has presented fresh opportunities and new concerns. No longer content with playing conventional roles women have advanced from the kitchen, eager to contribute their share towards the construction of a new order. This breaking out of bounds and seeking new ways of expression have been encouraged by some and looked with consternation by others.

During this process of revolution the structures of the Church have been called into question. The church, unfortunately, has been identified with oppressors and the dominant classes. The time has come to shed this role. In Christianity there is no dominant role. Just as Christ the head of the Church came to serve in all humility, the Church should serve its members. True, though all are equal in Christ members perform different functions; but this is not done on the basis of race, sex or superior intellect, but in all humility according to the will of the Father making full use of the talents which He has bestowed upon each. With this concept in view a deaconess was ordained as priest by the Anglican Bishop of Hong Kong, Dr. R. O. Hall, during the emergency created by the 2nd World War. The Anglican Church, however, did not think much of the idea then and the deaconess was reverted to her former position. The then Arch-

bishop of Canterbury William Temple has been reported to have said later, 'Personally I want to see women ordained to the priesthood. But still more do I want to see both real advance towards the re-union of Christendom, and the general emancipation of women. To win admission to the priesthood now would put back the former, to meet it would put back the latter'.

In 1948 at the Lambeth Conference the question of women's ordination surfaced again and was shelved. Two decades later the same question cropped up again as a burning issue at another Lambeth Conference. The Swedish Church had decided on ordaining women to the ministry after years of hot and bitter arguments. The opposition advised, 'Let your women keep silent in the church', while the proposers cried, 'God also speaks in our time.' Many churches soon followed the example of the Swedish church and a survey conducted in 1966 revealed that of the 168 member-churches of the World Council of Churches, 48 allowed full ordination to a full ministry and nine ordained to a partial or special ministry. The Church of Scotland was very strongly against ordaining women in 1960 and one Scottish minister, probably inspired by an association of ideas, was quoted as saying, 'A woman elder is like a lady dog. It is a confusion of terms.' Perhaps he was reminded of the great Dr. Johnson's analogy of a woman preacher being like a dog walking on its hind legs. Far more than finding the spectacle ludicrous Boswell's friend was surprised that it was done at all. Today unisex has ironed out this little problem. Not only is it being done now but done well and accepted as a logical outcome of a long tradition of dedicated missionary zeal and service.

The church has come a long way since St. John Chrysostom termed woman a 'necessary evil' and St. Jerome said that woman was 'the gate of the devil, the way of evil, the sting of a scorpion, in a word, a dangerous thing.' St. Gregory taught that male vice is superior to female virtue and Martin Luther's view, 'Women are on earth to bear children. If they die in child-bearing it matters not, that is all they are here to do' tops the cake.

In fact, according to Jean Angus of the Methodist Education Division in *Toward a Whole Theology*, 'At the Council of Macon, women were granted a soul by a majority of one vote, and the Wittenburg Conference tried to prove that women were not even human beings.'

In 517 the Synod of Burgundy abolished the ordination of deaconesses. Non-Christian Taboos against women's participation in church and social life reappeared and the church stepped over into the dark ages, adjusting and conforming to, instead of challenging the dictates of society; women were thus disallowed from serving at the altar and instead were graciously permitted to sweep and decorate the pews and aisles.

Man was created in the image of God. Bonhoeffer in *Creation and Fall* explains this as, 'Man is not alone, he is in duality and it is in this dependence on the other that his creatureliness consists—God—must not be thought of as being alone, inasmuch as he is the God who is Christ bears witness to his 'being for man.' The likeness (image Dei) the analogy of man to God, he says is an analogy of relations. Another eminent Theologian Karl Barth states in his *Church Dogmatics* that the creation of humanity is incomplete till both Adam and Eve prototype of Man and Woman stand together and 'are now the acting and responsible subject man. Freedom and liberation is for both male and female. Woman is man's true partner in the fullest sense, 'a being with her own autonomous nature and structure.'

From this position of equal status and inter-relatedness which is the very essence of co-humanity in community, woman was gradually forced into a subservient position. After the Fall, for which certainly Eve was not solely responsible, the female prototype of humanity was debased, and as in the case of the oppressed, lost identity and was dehumanized.

Women all over the world living in various cultures were subjected to this gradual debasement. Despite the decrees of Manu, we know for a fact that in India in Vedic times several women attained the status of *siddha* or guru and that women enjoyed equal opportunities as men in being well versed in both technical and practical aspects of the *Sadhanas*.

There is a popular misconception rampant that women in Islam may not enter Paradise because they do not possess souls. Jane L. Smith and Yvonne Y. Haddad who have together made a study of *Women in the After Life: The Islamic View as seen in Quran and Tradition* state that 'it is precisely because women do have souls that men have been able to employ the "Threat" of eternal punishment (in the Garden of Fire) in the hereafter for disobedience to husbands with a sometimes frightening specificity.' These threats are made 'despite Quranic assertions of equality' and assurances that the daughters of Eve have been tried by fire as gold and have been found superior to the *hurs* of Paradise. In Islam women occupy a prominent place in Sufism and

female Sufi saints have played a creative role in each Islamic society. It has been related that when Islam came to Indonesia although the people quickly adopted the new religion the Indonesian women laughed out loud when confronted with a *borkha*. No other argument was needed. Perhaps their sisters all over the world would have been better off if they also had used ridicule. The Hebrew thanked God each day that he was not born a woman. Rather the *Torah* be devoured by fire than its words be imparted to a woman. No woman was permitted even to read the scriptures nor allowed to enter the inner courts of the Temple. There was a question about her being ordained or holding sacerdotal office because of circumcision being one important condition. The Jew lived in constant disapproval of his neighbours and their procreating and bisexual gods. Yahweh alone was without a consort. It was in this cultural milieu that St. Paul was reared and his admonitions concerning women should therefore be accordingly studied in the light of his day. In fact St. Paul was far in advance of his time in advocating, prophesying, administering, teaching and other varied missionary activities through which the women of his time shared the ministry. They have been reported to be staunch, enthusiastic, reliable and many were subjected to cruel torture.

It is obvious that St. Paul did not advise men freedom to women 'that the word of God may not be discredited' (Titus 2: 5). 'So that an opponent may not be put to shame, having nothing evil to say of us' (Titus 2: 8). Hence the *status quo* was maintained for the sake of the witness of the gospel—in another age in a different cultural milieu far from which we have now travelled. Jesus himself took a revolutionary stand where women were concerned, lifting them out of their depressed status. He pointed out to Martha that the kitchen was certainly not woman's only place and that Mary had chosen the better part. Gerald O'Collins writing on the *Ordination of Women* says that 'to have gone further and called six men and six women to make up the twelve would have outraged his contemporaries to the point of destroying his work right from the outset'.

From this it is clear that the two questions, one dealing with the status of women in society and the other with women's ordination are inter-related. Women cannot be ordained until and unless she is on an equality with her male counterpart and on the other hand if she is ordained her status in church and society will be automatically defined. Krister Stendahl affirms this in *The Bible and the Role of Women* when he says, 'Thus the question of ordination of women is not a question about offices but a question as to the right relationship whether it applies to political office, civil service, career, home life, the ministry or to the episcopate.'

Women are endowed with various talents and capabilities which they would rightly like to exercise. The mores of society and church have stifled their creativity subjugating them through centuries of thralldom from which they long to be released.

The ordination last year of eleven women as Episcopal priests by four bishops, three of them retired, was judged irregular. The 'moral protestors' were accused of having 'placed themselves above the law' and the ordination was stated to be parallel to the Nixon case. Dr. Charles Willie, who preached the sermon at the ordination service held at Philadelphia on July 29, recalled the words of Gamaliel in the Acts of the Apostles who spoke against punishing the Apostles in case it was

God Himself who was ultimately being opposed. Gayle Graham Yates in the review of *Sexist Religion and Women in the Church* edited by Alice L. Hagemen states that 'seminary faculties and faculties of religion, caught in this era of recognition of sexism with no woman at all among their members, are scrambling to hire a woman, but that is often where their sensitivity ends'. She continues bitterly, 'Otherwise it is business as usual with their male pronouns and their male-oriented liturgies and their masculinist doctrine and their hierarchical structures and their contempt for the feminine presence.'

Both in 1972 and in 1974 an amendment to the constitution of the Church of South India was unsuccessfully sought at the 13th and 14th Synod meetings to substitute the word 'persons' for 'men' in regard to ordaining as presbyters. It is hoped that during the 15th CSI Synod meeting to be held in 1976, 'if Christians are to be consistent there can only be one possible decision in this matter.'

Before passing any decision for or against it will be necessary to carefully weigh human needs and prayerfully seek God's will. Steps are being taken to carefully interpret God's word with the use of the right pronouns. The Consultation on Church Union (COCU) has appointed a Task Force of Women, who have been commissioned 'to draw together the theological and sociological studies done by women relevant to emerging perspectives on women and to perspectives of women about the church.'

Contemporary feminist theology is being studied carefully and recognized. This falls generally into three categories. Ontological theology which recognizes female as being co-existent with male in humanity; Liberationist theology which is biblical, historical and political seeking to find God's will in the Perspective of oppressed peoples, and calling for dialogue which can only take place through sharing. Experimental theology which is written in the light of experiences of women and the bible.

Women theologians want liberation not in competition or senseless polarity but rather in dedication to 'that mutual service (*diakonia*) to which God calls us as he grants to our community a variety of gifts (*Charismata*) for his ministry'.

Jean Danielu in the *Ministry of Women in the Early Church* states that the status of women in the early Christian church changed according to the differing times and needs of society. Women's ministry was sometimes integrated with the ordained ministry and sometimes separated as lay ministry.

The Church of South India should not be found lagging behind the example set by various other denominations like the Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists and the Anglican Church in Hong Kong who have paved the way to ending the controversy regarding the ordination of women into the priesthood.

JEAN PARANJOTI AUGUSTINE.

The Nandyal Returning Ceremony

The 6th July, 1975, was an historic day in the life of both the Church of South India and the Church of North India, because on that day the return of Nandyal from CNI to CSI took place most ceremoniously and joyously. The two Moderators, the two Deputy Moderators, the two General Secretaries along with several Bishops and representatives of the Churches gathered together in Nandyal for the inauguration of the integration of the Nandyal Diocese into the CSI from the CNI. There was a long preparation for this important event. Resolutions were passed by the Synod of the CNI and that of the CSI for this change-over and prayers were offered and plans were ready. There was general discussion and agreement drawn up for the transaction, after carefully following all constitutional requirements necessary for such a change-over of a Diocese from one Church to other. The following were the agreements arrived at:—

- (1) that the minutes of the Joint Meeting of January 1975, held in Madras between the Negotiating Committees of the Church of North India and Church of South India as accepted by both the Churches shall form part and parcel of this agreement and shall be binding on (1) the Church of South India and the Church of North India and (2) also on Church of South India and the Nandyal Diocese within the Church of South India, after the latter's

reception into the Church of South India in pursuance of this agreement.

- (2) That as from the 6th of July, 1975, the Diocese of Nandyal shall cease to be a Diocese of the Church of North India and shall form a part of the Church of South India in accordance with the recommendations referred to in clause 1 above.
- (3) That as from the 6th of July, 1975, the Church of North India shall not have any right, title, interest, privileges or obligations in the Diocese of the Nandyal and shall rest in the Church of South India thereafter.
- (4) That the Church of South India shall accept the Diocese of Nandyal as from the 6th July, 1975, and the said Diocese shall henceforth form an integral part of the Church of South India.

Based on these resolutions we were all there for the momentous and magnificent service. The Nandyal Cathedral bell was sounded as the two Moderators, Deputy Moderators, Bishops and all the Clergy along with the Laity entered the Cathedral and started the service of the inauguration. From the beginning to the end, each one of us experienced the living presence of the Lord. The picturesque and symbolic white incense smoke filled the

altar and the rest of the cathedral. As the two Moderators met in front of the altar, exchanged greetings in the form of the 'holy-kiss' and ceremoniously handed over and took over the spiritual nurture and pastoral care and administration of the Diocese of Nandyal, it was not easy for the people to stand and be only spectators. We were all moved in spirit and some of us were visibly in tears, because it was such an experience of high order and it did bring out the great spiritual value attached to the pastoral care and the episcopal oversight under the guidance of the Holy Spirit demanded for such a responsibility. Hearts were filled with joy, peace and harmony ruled and we were all united in mind and spirit that it was an act of God that the people of God had been engaged in the transfer and in the act of inauguration. Both the Moderators delivered heart-moving addresses. The CSI in the words of our Moderator, had given to the people of Nandyal Diocese a warm and cordial welcome into the Church of South India and assured them that they would be partners in the joy and the meaningful co-operation as one body brought and knit together by the affirmation of the unbounded love of Jesus Christ.

Following this there was the communion service celebrated by the Moderators and the Bishops present assisted by the clergy of the Diocese. The congregation numbering over two thousand joyfully and with added assurance of the presence of the Holy Spirit, participated in the holy communion. There was sweet music by the choir, especially the ladies, and of course each one had an opportunity to lift his or her voice and to praise the Living Lord. The Rev. N. Bengemon, the Vice-president of the Diocese of Nandyal and Convener of the arrangement committee played a wonderful role in the preparation and execution of the entire programme, ably assisted by a large number of enthusiastic colleagues.

Following the service there was a mass Baptismal Service in one of the slum areas of the town, when a large number of people were baptised by the two Deputy Moderators.

It was most significant that the extension of the Kingdom was experienced on that very day of inauguration. Later in the evening, there was a public reception preceded by a huge procession from the railway station to the S.P.G. High School. The two Moderators were brought on a 'Ratham' beautifully and colourfully decorated. There were beating of drums, blowing of trumpets, firing of crackers, dancing and all merriments that would be fitting in a rural Indian set-up which presented a gala appearance.

The public meeting was attended by Christians and non-Christians and the details of the programme were well worked out. Our Moderator the Most Rev. Ananda Rao Samuel, presided over the function and there was a number of speakers expressing the joy of inauguration and the Honourable Minister of State for Tourism and Public Libraries, Dr. Chandrasekhar Devanada Rao was also present and brought greetings both from the Andhra State Chief Minister and from the lay people of the state.

Mrs. D. L. Gopal Ratnam our Hony. General Secretary, spoke and brought greetings to the people on behalf of the Church of South India. We were profusely garlanded with sweet smelling jasmine flowers and there was a pun on the Telugu word for garland namely 'Dhandam'. In the address of welcome presen-

ted to the Moderators the following words expressed their joyful agony of the past and the rich experience of the present 'Though for reasons well known, we had to endure pangs of separation from some of our brethren in 1947, we rejoice that the gracious Lord has enabled us to rejoin our brethren in the Church of South India after 27 years with our tradition and experience enriching the Diocese and the Church, so that it may learn to seek first and foremost the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, to heal the differences and dissensions that existed in the Church and to make the Diocese a viable geographical and administrative unit.' There is an obvious reason for such an expression of the people because the past history before 1947 and after 1947 up to 6th July, 1975, was one of separation, disappointment etc. and therefore, they were right to express their joy at the inauguration into the CSI. Here again it is worth quoting what they have said 'On this holy day, Sunday the 6th July in the year of our Lord Nineteen hundred and seventy-five, the inauguration of this historic merger of Nandyal Diocese with the Church of South India, which is the greatest landmark in the Church History, has been successfully accomplished, through a solemn service to the accompaniment of chorus, and oaths by the Presbyters and Deacons of the Holy Order amidst great joy and thanksgiving to the glory of God. Thus it has been made possible to be in full communion with Pan Anglican Church, which was not possible in 1947. This is a matter of great satisfaction, giving us air of freshness and tranquillity, leading us to walk in close and sweet fellowship with the Saviour, and to follow Him, the great Shepherd, by becoming His sheep; so that the truth of God shine upon our conscience to put us always in the right way.'

Historically, Nandyal was part of the Madras Diocese of the Anglican Church (CIBC) and it became an Archdeaconry when Bishop Azariah was made Assistant Bishop of Madras in 1911 and stationed at Dornakal. Bishop Azariah was in charge of the episcopal functions of Nandyal. In 1947 when the whole Church of South India was forging towards Church Union, Kurnool and Ananthapur Districts were to be made into one Diocese. Cuddapah and Chittoor were planned to be the other. But due to some misunderstanding Nandyal and Kurnool withdrew from the act of Church Union on 27th September, 1947, and hence parts of the Nandyal, Kurnool, Ananthapur and Chittoor were formed as Rayalaseema Diocese for which Bishop H. Sumitra was the first Bishop. Later Bishop Sunderesan was consecrated and assumed responsibility of the Rayalaseema Diocese. Until the integration there were CSI members in Nandyal, Kurnool and Ananthapur. The people of Nandyal who withdrew from joining the CSI maintained fellowship and communion with the CIBC which had a natural process of union when the CNI came into existence in 1970. The CNI most magnanimously put Bishop Bhandare the Deputy Moderator of the CNI to be the episcopal Commissary of this Diocese. We should be very grateful to the Moderator of the CNI, the episcopal Commissary, the Deputy Moderator and the dynamic General Secretary Mr. A. C. Dharmaraj who had kindly and gracefully led the people of Nandyal to realise that their natural, geographical and practical place and fellowship should be the CSI. The CNI and the CSI which have officially accepted to have full communion, and even went one step further to have plans for uniting into one Church, paved the way for the smooth integration of Nandyal with CSI.

So 6th of July is the date of birth of the 18th

Diocese of the CSI. It is a matter of joy, praise and thanksgiving that our people in Nandyal with 29 presbyters, 3 retired clergy and 6 permanent deacons with more than forty thousand people will come into the fold of the Church of South India with all their assets and liabilities. May we welcome them and pray for them that this integration would be lasting, peaceful and blessed.

Following the historic connections the Moderator in consultation with the Officers, appointed the Rt. Rev.

P. Solomon to be the episcopal Commissary of the Moderator for Nandyal. We have the full hope and confidence that Bishop Solomon with his rich experience will lead the people in the right path giving them all the spiritual guidance they need and there shall be absolute oneness, and harmony and the Diocese will grow from strength to strength and the Lord's name will be magnified and glorified.

SOLOMON DORAISAWMY,
Bishop.

‘Jesus Christ Frees and Unites’— He also Divides

Christians from all over the world will gather in Nairobi, Kenya, on November 23 at the Fifth Assembly of the World Council of Churches. There they will consider the theme ‘Jesus Christ Frees and Unites’. To the outsider, the theme probably sounds predictable, tame and irrelevant, a bit of in-house shoring up by Christians who want to bolster their sagging impact on the world and on each other.

In fact, however, the consequences of the theme are unpredictable, volatile and frighteningly relevant, particularly if we stress an implication of the theme that is thus far implicit rather than explicit. For the crucial word in the Nairobi theme is a missing word, and it is around that missing word that the important discussion must take place.

The theme also states that ‘Jesus Christ . . . unites’. In a world of deep division, the word of unity is likewise crucial.

The theme does *not* state that Jesus Christ divides. This is the missing word. I see no way to deny the divisiveness that enters in when Jesus Christ enters in. He divides me from my Jewish friends in the pluralistic nation in which I live. He divides me from my professional colleagues in the secular university in which I teach. He divides me from the adherents of other world religion in the global family of which I am a part.

More than that, he divides me from many of my fellow Christians. That Christ divides Christians (as well as freeing and uniting) becomes apparent to me when I—a white, middle-class Christian from the most affluent nation on earth—confront the ‘theology of liberation’ emerging among Christians from the ‘Third World’.

The theology of liberation comes down heavily on the first part of the Nairobi theme: ‘Jesus Christ frees’. But it talks about freedom in ways that, initially at least, divide Christians from one another. It says that the God and Father of Jesus Christ, who is also the God of the Exodus, is a *God who takes sides*. He works to free his people, and his people are the poor, the disadvantaged of the earth, the victims of injustice, those whom our social structures stifle and strangle and suffocate.

Just as Jahweh freed the oppressed Israelites from the power of pharaoh, i.e. from the power of evil and despotic social structures, so today he works to free the oppressed from the power of modern Pharaohs, from the evil and

despotic social structures that still perpetuate injustice. It is this theme that Jesus made his own in his famous (and upsetting) sermon in Nazareth, when he announced that he had come to ‘proclaim release to the captives . . . to set at liberty those who are oppressed’.

‘Good news to the oppressed. Bad news to the oppressors.’

And who are the modern oppressors? The contemporary parallels to the biblical story are unmistakable: we affluent, white, northern hemisphere Christians live in nations that set themselves *against* ‘liberty to those who are oppressed’. We oppress with our soldiers, our bombers, our napalm, our tariffs, our foreign investments and our diplomats. And since the Bible is talking about freedom from economic and political oppression as well as freedom from the oppression of individual sin, the message that ‘Jesus Christ frees’ can only come to us initially as a threatening word, dividing us from our fellow Christians who are the victims of the social structures that support us, and dividing us even from Christ himself.

He told us, unmistakably, that when we deny food and shelter to the hungry and destitute, we are thereby denying it to him also. If that is a picture of the future, it is also a description of the present.

So if we are to hear the healing word that Jesus Christ unites, it will only be after we have heard the harsh word that he first of all divides.

And here is where, despite the scorn of the outsiders, the Church still has something in its favour, for it represents a community defined not in national or class or geographical terms, but exactly in global terms. Within it the word of liberation, so initially threatening to the ‘oppressors’, can become liberating for them as well.

Nairobi will create an opportunity for those who find they have been working *against* God’s purposes to free the oppressed, to begin to change sides—to discover that their commitment to the global community that is the Church must be deeper than their commitment to their national or class or racial communities. What the specific working out of this would mean is far from clear, but there are precedents for walking this ancient road, since the road is called conversion.

No route less exacting is open to us.

ROBERT MCAFEE BROWN

'Confessing Christ Today'

Appropriately, the Fifth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, to be held in Kenya at the end of the year, opens the discussion with the only subject that is unique to the Christian faith: confessing Christ today....

Three revealing words, focussing not on an issue but on a man: Jesus of Nazareth, whom Christians follow because they recognize in Him both the fullness of God and the essence of man. Faith is not an ideology nor a system of thought but personal confidence that this man can and does hold the key to the understanding of history, the meaning of life, the hope for the future, the answer to the worries of mankind.

The *verb* in this affirmation is the active word. Most people will hold it to mean something like 'telling the life-story of Christ to others', yet the original meaning goes much deeper than that. Confessing is etymologically connected with martyrdom: it describes being a witness, whatever fate may befall the one who gives it form. Even scant knowledge of the history of Christian confessors reveals a treasury of sacrifice and joyful suffering: one sees the Christians of the early centuries crucified, thrown to the lions, massacred yet sticking stubbornly to their non-violent stance, their liturgy of praise, forgiveness of their enemies, unquenchable expectation and an almost irritating humility.

Surely, many horrors have been committed in the name of Christ, too; who shall deny that? Yet nobody will write 'confessing Christ' over those dark pages of church history. The confessors of 19 centuries of Christian faith are not the warriors, the power hunters, the exploiters, the defenders of slavery or colonial rule. The name is reserved for those who found in their generation the way of thinking and the way of life which is so powerfully described in the Beatitudes: they were the poor in spirit, the sorrowful, the gentle spirits, the ones who hungered and thirsted to see right prevail, who showed mercy, who were single-minded, who made peace and who suffered persecution. 'Confessor of Christ' is the title of honour for those little brothers — that has always been a better name for them than the originally pejorative name 'Christian' — who imitated Jesus of Nazareth in his love for the sick and the alienated, for men and women who had perceived their own lostness and above all, who had learned from this man the strange art of confidence in God, so deep and persuasive that He went His way of suffering and death trusting in the power of His Father, who could bring Him back from the dead.

The history of confessing Christ runs like a thin but strangely beautiful line through man's pilgrimage amidst lots of religious perversion and secular persecution. So much for the Name and the verb.

There is a third element in the first topic of the Assembly: that beguiling, tiny word 'today', storehouse of reality! All ideologies, all heresies, all happiness and injustice, all exploitation and expectation are stacked between the lines of this five-letter word.

How shall Christ be confessed in this 'today'? Shall Christians go to Northern Ireland and recite the canons of Dordrecht, which tried to spell out the mysteries of

God's election? Should the good people of the Midwestern U. S. A. confess Christ with the words coined by a contemporary Italian layman, elder of the Waldensian Church and member of the communist party in Italy? Should the Russian Christian confess Christ in the same manner as the black prisoner of the South Africa regime? Confessing Christ today does not only mark us with the questions of our time, but also with those of our situation. If once Christ was to be confessed defiantly by giving Him the title of the Emperor—much to the dismay of that royalty which would rather not get mixed up with a two-dime Jewish self-styled Messiah — He now is to be confessed in the face of the powers of our day, claiming their glory: He is the guarantor of our Peace and He develops the world, He is our safety and our defence. He is the liberator.

It follows that the World Council of Churches cannot speak about confessing Christ without being profoundly irritating to all who have power. Those churches which are still quite used to being regarded as pillars of the existing society, and always behaved that way, are no less irritated when their own people start to confess Christ today. It has been the historic contribution of the World Council of Churches that many Churches for the first time in history learned what it means not to be conformed to this world.

But not only irritation is our lot. There is confusion too, originating from the bewildering complexity of cultural expressions of the Christian faith.

Since the economy of the Gospel is directed more to confronting people in their situation than to building general theories and concepts, a whole range of confessions confronts us. Worse: they cannot be added up to form together one beautiful palette of religious colours. Some of the expressions of the same faith bite each other. It is quite proper to worship Christ who makes us enjoy the good things in life, our welfare, the abundance of the harvest, prosperity. It is even more proper to worship Christ who judges those who do not share their wealth. Rich and poor churches can easily develop confessions which say opposite things. In the World Council of Churches a favourite phrase was coined to describe that clash: the same Christ who unites us divides us.

In this situation, often dramatic and deeply puzzling to Christians who regarded 'peace' and quiet a sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit, the ecumenical movement discovers that confrontation can be a form of unity. Where political groups and social institutions would have long since split, churches insist that the Name they confess is stronger than the divisions they suffer. And they prove that by staying together, staging public debates about what divides them, the period during which they covered up these deeply divisive issues is definitely over.

The world regards it all with amazement. Smart people recognize that the ecumenical movement presents a model in which disagreement and even bitter dissension can find a place in a community which confesses to live, not out of its own strength, but on the confession of a common Name.

ALBERT VAN DEN HEUVEL

[OCTOBER 1975]

The Madras Counselling Centre— First Anniversary

Governor K. K. Shah commended the work of Madras Counselling Centre and highlighted the relevance of counselling in the modern age 'crisis of confidence'.

The Rt. Rev. Archbishop R. Arulappa, welcomed the chief guest, His Excellency K. K. Shah, and others at the function held at Lutheran Theological College on Sept. 6, 1975. During the celebration, speakers gave historical background, reports of activities, statements of criteria for counsellors, and told of the Centre's various needs and plans.

Using personal illustrations, Governor K. K. Shah gave examples similar to those reported as coming to the Counselling Centre. A doctor skilfully led him to stop smoking. Seriousness mingled with humour as the Governor indicated how he as a lawyer, a reformed pick-pocket who was his client, and the involved police could have used some counselling. Then he pointed to parental guidance he wants to give and for which he expressed the need of help, saying, 'I need a counsellor.' He encouraged a true Christian spirit and approach in the Counselling Centre programme.

Rev. Carlos Welch, Acting Director of the Christian Counselling Centre, Vellore, commended the Madras Counselling Centre and especially the team of volunteers who give of themselves and much of their time to keep the Centre open from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.—Monday through Saturday. Mr. Welch said it is equally urgent to meet the Mental health needs of India's people while dealing with many other needs of the very poor.

Rev. Trinity Bhaskaran, a volunteer counsellor, spoke of counselling needs and the qualities of skill, concern and availability which give the counsellor the capacity to help those who have problems.

The Rt. Rev. Sundar Clarke invited those present to offer or find a more adequate location for the Madras

Counselling Centre, to publicize, use and refer others to the Counselling Centre services.

Mrs. Annie David, Director, reported on the present counselling services: counselling and referrals, in-service training for volunteers, short training courses sponsored by the Centre, and courses in Madras and elsewhere at the request of other institutions, organizations and Churches. She listed 434 counselling interviews held at the Centre during the year. Melvin Cassady, Programme Director, reported in the Souvenir released by Governor K. K. Shah, more than 35 training courses with approximately 500 participants.

Mrs. David spoke of the need for 120 volunteers so that the Centre might have an around the clock telephone service and develop an emergency squad who would go out and attend to crisis needs, including suicide prevention. She further traced the history of the Centre beginning with the inaugural function on January 2nd, 1974, by Bishop Lesslie Newbigin and the new block of offices declared open on August 16th, 1974, by the Hon'ble Health Minister, Mr. Anbazhagan.

At the end of the function, Mr. M. Nelson the Secretary thanked the speaker, the staff of the Madras Counselling Centre and the guests.

Bishop Sundar Clarke stated, 'The Madras Counselling Centre is to help you. Its services are to people irrespective of caste, community and creed and to help them in all situations.'

The Rt. Rev. Archbishop R. Arulappa's concern for the Counselling Centre was expressed as follows: 'I wish and pray that the blessing and help of the Supreme "Counsellor" of all men, God, be on this Institution and all those who are making earnest efforts that it may serve the Community.'

The Meeting of the CSI Women's Fellowship Central Committee

From the 15th to the 17th August, at the United Theological College, Bangalore.

The theme of the meeting was equality, advancement and peace. At the business meeting the following resolutions were passed:

Regarding Ordination of women

Resolved to recommend to the Synod through the Synod Ministerial Committee that the CSI Women's Fellowship Central Committee at its meeting held on 17-8-75 at Bangalore unanimously resolved that 'Ordination of Women' be accepted by the Synod immediately at its impending session in January 1976.

Regarding Women Representatives to the Synod

(A) Resolved to request the Bishop of each Diocese to give to women 40% of representation in contingent of delegates to the Synod.

(B) Since some of the Dioceses have already chosen their Synod delegates for the biennium 1976-78, it was resolved to request the Moderator of the Church of South India to give a generous 50% representation to women in his nomination to the Synod.

Women's Fellowship to have recognised standing at the Synod level

Resolved unanimously to request the Moderator and the Synod to give the position and Status of a standing Board of the Synod to the Women's Fellowship of the C. S. I. and call this Board as the 'Board of Women's work'.

A place for Women's Fellowship at the Synod Executive Level

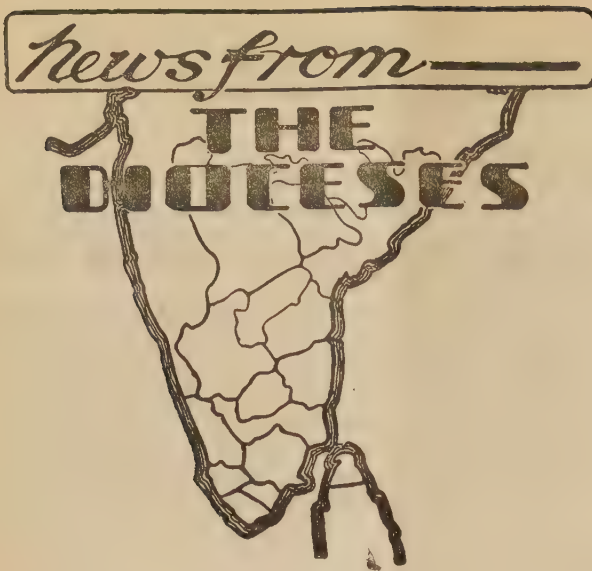
Resolved unanimously to request the Moderator and the Synod to give a reserved seat to the Secretary of the C. S. I. Women's Fellowship at the Synod Executive Committee.

To meditate upon, study, and discuss the theme 'Jesus Christ Frees and Unites' which is the theme for the 5th Assembly of the World Council of Churches to be held in Nairobi, Kenya, from November 23—December 19, 1975, a Conference for about 40 men and women of different age groups coming from different walks of life, representing a cross section of our Diocese, was held from 15th to 17th August 1975 in Madurai. There were a few representatives from the Dioceses of Trichy-Tanjore, Coimbatore and Tirunelveli as participants in the conference.

Our Bishop gave a brief and challenging address on the opening day inviting the delegates to share his vision and concern of communicating what is happening at the W. C. C. level to the level of the village congregations.

We have sent to the W. C. C. General Secretary a report of this conference.

REV. V. M. GNANARAJ



SOUTH KERALA DIOCESE

Inauguration of the B. D. programme in the Kerala United Theological Seminary, Trivandrum

On 15th August 1975, in a public meeting held at 5.30 p.m. the B.D. Programme was officially inaugurated in the Kerala United Theological Seminary. His Grace Paulos Mar Gregorios, Principal, Orthodox Theological Seminary, Kottayam, presided over the function and Rt. Rev. Solomon Doraisawmy, Deputy Moderator of the Church of South India gave the inaugural address. All the three bishops of CSI in Kerala were present on the occasion. The Souvenir published to mark this historic event was released by the chairman.

Immediately before the public meeting, a new library building was opened by Prof. Samuel Mathai, former Vice-Chancellor of Kerala University. The construction of this building was made possible by the generous gift of the Basel Mission in Germany.

The K. U. T. Seminary is a joint institution of four churches in Kerala namely, the South Kerala, Madhya Kerala, and North Kerala Dioceses of C. S. I. and the Church of God in South India. This Seminary was founded in 1943 amalgamating the Union Divinity School of the LMS, Cambridge Nicholson Institute, Kottayam and the Nettoor Seminary of the Basel Mission. In 1943, it was an L. Th. grade Seminary. Later L. Th. course was stopped and B. Th. course was started. Now it is raised to a B. D. college. The present B.D. programme is a new and bold venture in the field of Theological education in Kerala for, it is the only institution which teaches in the Malayalam medium at the B. D. level.

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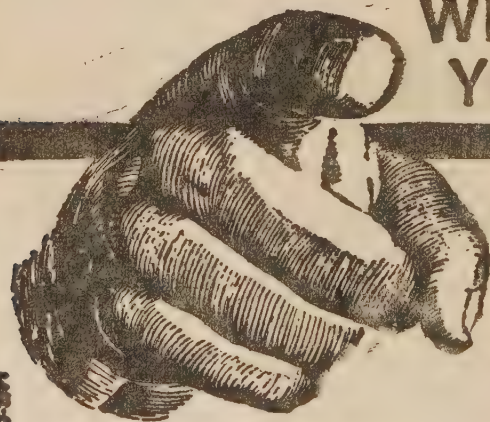
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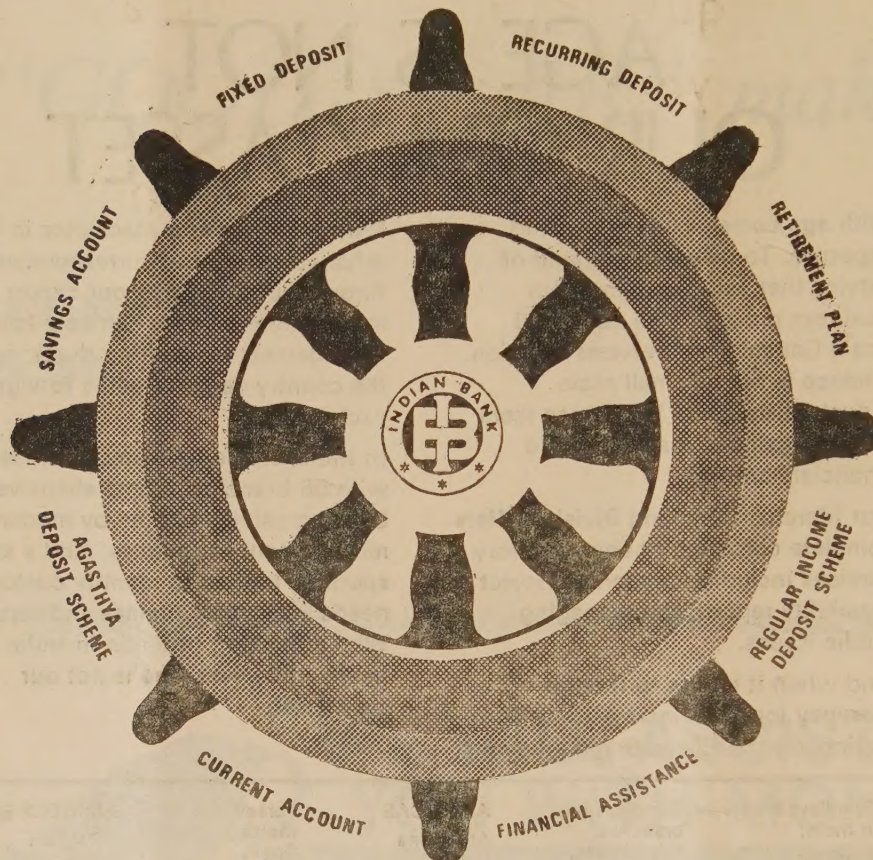
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